

Community Event Makes a Come Back



Victoria Bone,
Office and Marketing
Manager

Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs. Does this sound familiar? For Williston natives, you may remember this event! Hooked on Fishing was a community event that used to be held in Williston some years ago and thanks to the Williams County Community Grant Program, Eckert was able to bring it back!

The Williams County Board of County Commissioners awarded a grant of funds from the Williams County General Fund to assist in funding a community project. This community project needed to have a public purpose and aim to improve the quality of life, preserve historic sites, fulfill a community need, or enhance community programming in Williams County. We took this grant opportunity to bring back Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs.

Eckert was awarded \$10,000 from the Williams County General Fund to use towards the community project assistance expenditures that Eckert had prepared. The funding is for the community event in 2024 and 2025. This year's event took place in the end of June at Spring Lake Park.

For the event, Eckert provided fishing supplies such as poles, bait, hooks, event t-shirts, as well as food and drinks for attendees. Eckert also had education booths to educate those who attended on nicotine, marijuana, impaired driving, and Narcan.

Additionally, resource tables were provided from the Williston Police Department, Williams County Sherriff's Department, NDSU Extension, Parent and Family Education Network, Upper Missouri District Health Unit, North Dakota Public Health, and Parents Lead.

The community event had a wonderful turnout of local families who were able to enjoy an afternoon of fishing fun with Eckert and learn about the dangers of substance use. Make sure to follow us on Facebook to see when our 2025 Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs Event will be!



Special thanks to Carly Collings, MSW intern for all of her hard work on the Hooked On Fishing Not on Drugs event! Without her dedication, none of this would have been possible!

John's Letter



Did you know that in July of 2025 that Eckert will celebrate their 50th anniversary? Yes, it is true. It was July of 1975 that the Fred and Clara Eckert Foundation for Children was established. The Foundation is responsible for the Eckert Youth Homes and their operation. Without our Foundation board and their support, we would not have been able to help the youth of North Dakota for the last 50 years.

Most of you are aware that from 1975 to 2019 (44 years) Eckert was a Residential Child Care Facility (R.C.C.F.) This is a more complete term for a residential long-term foster care home. If it were not for federal legislation in 2018 Eckert would have continued with the same program that we began so many years ago. The Family First Prevention Act stated that it is better to place kids with their parents than to place them in long-term foster care homes. Because of this passed legislation the staff at Eckert made the decision to offer substance abuse treatment to 13-18 year olds in a residential setting. In the latter part of 2019, we decided to renovate our program, our staff and our facilities to accommodate the new program.

We opened our doors to the new program on March 2020, and since that time we have served well over 200 youth. In 2021 we opened an Outpatient program to serve those in our community who may need treatment, but not as severe as those in our residential program. Eckert continues to carry out the wishes of our founders, Fred and Clara Eckert.

Join us we celebrate 50 years of God's faithfulness and service to our community and beyond.

Thank you, John L. Harper
Facility Administrator at Eckert



Tech4Kids

Victoria Bone, Office and Marketing Manager

The community continues to be very supportive of our mission and Tech4Kids made a difference for our youth. Tech4Kids made a generous donation to Eckert this year with 10 laptops! Tech4Kids is a nonprofit organization that provides technology to kids who may not have it available to them. These laptops were provided for our youth to use while in our care to complete schoolwork and even job applications. The laptops were able to be used at both our residential and outpatient facilities.

Volunteer of a Decade



Bill Christensen is pictured with his daughter Jan Stoner as John L. Harper from Eckert presented him with a plaque celebrating his 10 years of volunteer service. Bill has been teaching Eckert residents woodworking skills since 2014.

A Renovation at Eckert

Victoria Bone, Office and Marketing Manager

This last year Eckert has been blessed in so many ways and one of the ways was with the Weidner Cares! Project. Weidner Apartment Homes has a program in which they provide community services events and this past year that event was to renovate one of our homes! Our boys' homes, which has been standing for almost 50 years was in dire need of renovation and Weidner Cares provided the manpower and some expenses to help! In a three-day project with the help of around 40 volunteers the boys home got a huge makeover. This included a lot of interior painting, new light fixtures, updates to kitchen cabinets and more. Although the originally planned one-day renovation turned into three, the boys' home was looking brand new! The Weidner Cares! Project truly put in an extensive amount of effort into the home to make our residents feel more comfortable during their stay with us.



A Construction Company Gives Back

Victoria Bone Office and Marketing Manager

As a nonprofit organization, we thrive with the support from our community. A large supporter the last couple of years has been Burns & McDonnell, a Missouri-based construction company working in the area. Burns & McDonnell prides their company on giving back to the local communities in which they are working in with the mindset of leaving communities better than when they found it. With a goal of helping to shape the future, Burns & McDonnell has raised funds for Eckert, via donations the last two years. Last year, in the fall of 2023, they raised \$27,972 in donations to support recreational activities for youth during their treatment stay. This summer, they raised and donated \$30,490 to replace furniture in the homes and outpatient office. The impact this company has made for us cannot be overstated, they have made a big difference in the lives of the youth and families we serve.



Opportunities at Eckert: Transforming Lives, Advancing Careers, and Embracing Growth

At Eckert Youth Homes, opportunity is at the core of everything we do.

Whether it's the opportunities we create for the youth in our care, the professional growth we offer to our dedicated staff, or the opportunities our program itself encounters as we evolve, each facet is woven together with a single goal: transformation. As we move into a new chapter in 2024, we embrace these opportunities with a renewed sense of purpose and a bold vision for the future.

This year marks a pivotal moment in Eckert's journey. After years of collaboration with the state, Eckert is now operating as a fully private program. This step represents an exciting opportunity for us to expand our services in ways that align even more closely with our vision and mission. We are able to tailor our approach more specifically to the needs of the youth and families we serve. It also opens the door for new partnerships, such as our recent agreement with the Department of Juvenile Services. These at-risk youth who are navigating the juvenile justice system, like all youth, deserve the chance to change their lives and seize opportunities. We are honored to play a role in their journey.

We are also exploring ways to enhance our outreach into surrounding communities. By offering outpatient services and community education, we can support those who may not need residential care but still require guidance and intervention. This represents a significant opportunity for Eckert to broaden our impact and serve more families across North Dakota.

Eckert remains committed to the professional growth of our staff. We serve as a training site for social work students

and addiction counselor trainees, and many of our staff pursue higher education with Eckert's full support. These opportunities not only enhance our team's expertise but also empower them to grow professionally.

As Ephesians 5:16 reminds us, we are called to make the most of every opportunity because the days are full of challenges. At Eckert, we recognize the preciousness of each opportunity to positively impact a young person's life and steer them toward a brighter future. The challenges we face, both as individuals and as an organization, are real. But with each challenge comes the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive. As we look to the future, we are confident that Eckert will continue to be a place where opportunities abound for everyone who walks through our doors.

NDTAAP

Eckert Youth Homes is proud to be part of the North Dakota Training Academy



Academy for Addiction Professionals (NDTAAP), a statewide consortium dedicated to preparing the next generation of addiction counselors. Through a blend of rigorous coursework and hands-on clinical experience, NDTAAP ensures that trainees develop the skills and competencies needed for licensure as addiction counselors in North Dakota. Dr. Hoffman, a member of the NDTAAP board of directors, has training spots available at Eckert, offering trainees an apprenticeship model that fosters both professional and personal growth. For more information, visit www.ndtaap.org.

Dr. Leah Hoffman,
PhD, LMHC
Clinical Director

Shape a Life.... Build a Future

You can make a difference in the lives of the youth at Eckert.

I want to share the story of one of our former Eckert residents in their own words:

"My experience at Eckert was life changing. I was a scared young girl who struggled with addiction. I felt like my life was hopeless before going to Eckert. Eckert showed me how beautiful it was to be sober. How great life can be without drugs and alcohol. Eckert gave me hope for my future. Granted I've relapsed several times, but Eckert was always willing to help me. Eckert always took me back in when I called out for help, they never turned me away. The staff there always believed in me and the person I can be. They saw my potential. I'm absolutely so blessed to have gotten the help I needed from Eckert.

If it wasn't for that place and the people that work there, I would've been dead at a very young age. Because of my experience at Eckert, I never gave up on myself. I am an addict; I've struggled on and off even after my 4 stays at Eckert. But Eckert showed me a life that I could never imagine. Eckert saved my life many times and taught me to never give up on myself. So here I am today, a month shy of being a year sober. I'm an assistant manager at Hope Manor Sober Living, I'm a freshman in college, maintaining a job, and I'm financing my first car! All these beautiful gifts of sobriety. I couldn't have all of this without having the experience at Eckert and I truly believe that."

Would you take a moment and consider a partnership with Eckert?

Your faithful giving makes it possible to plant seeds in the hearts of these young people. Did you know that Eckert has an endowment fund? When you contribute to the Eckert Endowment Fund you may qualify for a tax credit of 40%. Please consult your tax professional for more information. Thank you in advance for your partnership with Eckert as we make a difference in the young people of North Dakota. Fred and Clara Eckert saw the need and responded, will you?

I want to
make a
difference
through
Eckert 

Your tax-deductible gift will help provide care, counseling and shelter to adolescents struggling with addiction.

This Gift is made: _____ In Memory of _____ In Celebration of

_____ Eckert Endowment Fund

Name: _____

Please send an acknowledgement to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Amount of gift: \$ _____ *(please make checks payable to Eckert Youth Homes)*

You can also donate by going to our website, Eckertyouth.com and click "Donate."

Donor's (Your) Name: _____

Address: _____

*Mail this form and payment to Eckert, PO Box 2291, Williston, ND 58802

Friends of Eckert

April 2023 - August 2024

Thank you to the following for cash donations:

American Legion Post 37 - Williston
Andrew Harrell
Angela Palmer
Anonymous
Anonymous - Thrivent
Armando Gutierrez
Arnold Santibanez
Ashley Applebury
Ashley Weisz
Basin Electric
Bethlehem WELCA - Noonan
Brandon Hernandez
Brenden Peterson
Bryant Ball
Buck & Lois Scheele Foundation
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First Lutheran Church, WELCA - Watford City
Gary Sundquist
Gerald Scholl
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church - Williston
Great Plains Women's Health Center, P.C.
Greg & Char Quarne
Gwen Roffler
Hannah Freeland
Henry & Randi Jangula
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James & Paula Slow
James & Phyllis Stokke
Janah Young
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Jerome & Patricia Hanson Family Foundation
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Nicholas Hoch
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The Jerome & Darlene Langseth Foundation
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Wegner Homes, Inc.
West Prairie WELCA - Williston
William and Melanie Stillwell
Williston API
Winston & Candyce Titus
Women of Life, Our Redeemer's Church
Writing Rock Church
Yvonne Hurley
Zachary Maier
Zion WELCA - McGregor

Thank you!

We also wish to acknowledge those individuals and businesses who contributed to Eckert in previous years.

Thank you to the following for donations of non-cash items:

Anonymous	Brittany Eckart	Quilters	Orrin Dockham
All Seasons Sport About	Bruce & Bev Conway	Haley Jeannotte	Pamela Williams
Allan Laurel	Carrie Burris	Heather Sturgis	Priscilla Otto
Amber Petzl	Christine Verespe	Henry and Randi Jangula	Rachel Atkins
Arlene Tvedt	Dina Norby	Jackie Collings	Relay For Life
Ashley McFarlane	Dwight and Paula Richter	James & Paula Slow	Rheanda Axtman
Aubree Leiser	Dwight Buerkle	Jenna Arp	Sandra Kirkegaard
Aurora Claflin	Erin Eldridge	Jimmy Robertson - NOS	Sondra Stallworth
Bainville Senior Center	Eunice Christopherson	John & Charlene Wesoloski	Tara Deering
Barb Burgum	Exhale - Glow Challenge	Kathy Loomer	Tara Erickstad
Bill & Ruth Glenn	Team 6	Kristina Haugen	Tech 4 Kids Foundation
Border Plains Equipment	First Lutheran Church -	Leah Hoffman	Terra Ellingson
Bree Strickland	Williston	Loren Perrin	The Salvation Army
Bree Falcon	First Lutheran Church -	Melissa Piszler	Tom & Brandie Christian
Breeun Willard	Christian Concerns	Michelle Nietz	Trevor Vertal
Brian & Janah Young	Ginger Swalom	Mrs. Olson	Weidner Apartment Homes
Brian & Karla Salvesson	Gloria Dei Lutheran Church	Northern Oilfield Services	Whitney Hampton - Russell

In Memory of:

Steve Larvick

Marvene Larvick

Ashley Tangedal & Donald Nehring

Rick & Denise Nehring

Casey Johnson

Brett & Amanda Wisness

Leslie Pfau

Melanie Stillwell

Albert and Mary Lou Dhuyvetter

Brad and Denise Johnson

Cheryl Hilleran

Lois and Kurt Brew

Timothy Schmelz

Greg & Lori Wishart

George and Irene Panasuk and Bland & Bernice Carter

Dana & Brenna Panasuk

John Fosland

Sherill Fosland

Lucas Cowgill

Joe & Nina Cowgill

Aveard & Edith Fjelstad

Nick & Dana Johnson

Beatrice Sivertson

Janice Sanford

Chuck & Millie Callahan and Rev. Michael J. Callahan and Robert "Bob" Mackley

Jeff & Nancy Vickers

Cheryl Hilleran

Kurt & Lois Brew

Arlene and Marvin D. Johnson

Arlys Frazier

Bob Quackenbush

David & VeAnna Selid

Jordy Larvick and Delores Nordhagen

James & Phyllis Stokke

Arlene Tvedt

David and VeAnna Selid

Walt Groth

Shirley Groth

Bill Nero

Andrea Finders

Leora "Wiseman" Sukut

Gary Sukut

Bruce Conway

Sharon Anderson

Marlin Braaten

John Kasmer

Lenore Fistoe

Lois Redka

Cory Preul

The Enget Family

Our Daughter,

Connie Jean Moe Wold

Orrin & Joyce Moe

Everett Hurley

Yvonne Hurley

John Jacobson

In Celebration of:

Our Family

Gary and Betty Bruins

Jesus' Birthday

Gwen Roffler

Our children and grandchildren

Ronald and Elizabeth Lund

Our children

Stuart and Michelle Dolan

Our Children & Grandchildren

Larry and Myrna Nelson

Our Children, Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren

Mary Ann Gaudreau

Our Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren

Rollin & Joyce Wolter

Our Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren

Larry and Vicky Schaff

Ashley Weisz

The Kemp Family

Robert and Deb Kemp

4 beautiful and healthy Granddaughters

Rich and Barb Daniels Webster

Birth of Jesus Christ

Stewart and Carol Vachal

My son, Benjamin

Janah Young

Our Granddaughters

Rick & Sue Johnson

Our Children & Grandchildren

Rich & Jane Studsrud

Our children and grandchildren

Gary & Martha Sorenson



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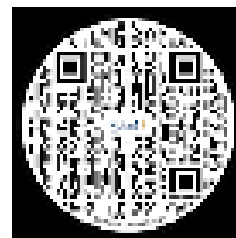
www.eckertyouth.com

Please direct all inquiries to
John L. Harper at (701) 572-7262.

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BCBS Caring Foundation Grant

The Blue Cross Blue Shield Caring Foundation awarded Eckert Youth Homes a grant to purchase the RealCare Baby 3 Baby Simulator, a key addition to Eckert's comprehensive life skills and education program. This innovative program will provide critical lessons in infant care, parenting skills, and teen pregnancy prevention, empowering our youth with practical knowledge and protective factors that will support their future success.

